

Privacy Notice for Housing Benefit, Council Tax Support, Discretionary Housing Payment and Hardship Fund

Purpose for processing your information

To quickly and accurately assess you for entitlement to Housing Benefit, Council Tax Support, Discretionary Housing Payment and/or Hardship Fund.

We collect the following information:

Details about you, people in your household and possibly third parties such as your landlord or joint tenants is required. The information needed includes:

Name
Address
Date of birth
National Insurance Number
Income including earnings, self-employed accounts, benefits received/claimed, loans, student income, pensions
Expenditure such as child care costs
Capital including bank/building society accounts, shares
Rent details
Contact details including telephone number and email
Landlord name and address and possibly bank account
Details of who else lives in your household and the above details for them as well as for yourself

This information is only used for the intended purpose but if we intend to use it for any other purpose; we will normally ask you first. In some cases, the Council may use your information for another purpose if it has a legal duty to do so, to provide a complete service to you, to prevent and detect fraud, or if there is a risk of serious harm or threat to life.

How we collect your information

Information could be collected from:

You
Department for Work and Pensions (DWP)
Her Majesty's Revenues and Customs (HMRC)
Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government
Cabinet Office
Other local authorities
Other Council Services
Third parties such as your employer. We will normally ask for your consent before doing this.
Credit Reference Agencies: normally TransUnion

Information will be collected using different methods including by letter, email, face-to-face, online forms, electronic transfer of information from central government departments mainly DWP, HMRC and Cabinet Office

Who the information is shared with

The information may be shared with the following:

You

Council staff employed to administer Housing Benefit, Council Tax Support, Discretionary Housing Payment, Hardship Fund, Free School Meals and/or Social Care Financial Assessments

Department for Work and Pensions (DWP)
Her Majesty's Revenues and Customs (HMRC)
Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government
Cabinet Office

An external company who are paid to administer Housing Benefit and Council Tax Support on behalf of the local authority

External companies who deliver services to enable your Housing Benefit, Council Tax Support, Discretionary Housing Payment and/or Hardship Fund claim to be processed, for example by supplying an online claim form service

Other Council Services

Other local authorities

Landlords or managing agents if:

- We have the claimant's consent,
- Housing Benefit is paid to them directly then basic information will be shared such as the amount of benefit entitlement and the period of entitlement
- There is an overpayment of benefit to the landlord or managing agent
- Legislation says we have to share information such as telling Housing Associations that a tenant's Housing Benefit is restricted due to the Benefit Cap or Size Restriction

The information you give us will be verified and subject to periodic review. The council use third party organisations to assist us with carrying out such checks using financial and credit referencing information. We work with TransUnion UK (formally Call Credit) their privacy notice can be seen at <https://www.transunion.co.uk/legal-information/privacy-centre>

Information will usually only be shared to enable quick and accurate assessment of Housing Benefit, Council Tax Support, Discretionary Housing Payment and/or Hardship Fund. If we intend to use it for any other purpose; we will normally ask you first. In some cases, the Council may use your information for another purpose if it has a legal duty to do so, to provide a complete service to you, to prevent and detect fraud, or if there is a risk of serious harm or threat to life.

How long do we keep your information?

Your information will be held for up to 6 years after your claim for one of the services was closed

Your rights and access to your information

You have the right to request a copy of the information that we hold about you.

The new General Data Protection Regulation also gives you additional rights about the information we hold about you and how we use it, including the right to:

- Withdraw consent and the right to object and restrict further processing of your data; however, this may affect service delivery to you.
- Request to have your data deleted where there is no compelling reason for its continued processing and provided that there are no legitimate grounds for retaining it.
- Request your data to be rectified if it is inaccurate or incomplete
- Have your data transferred or copied should you move to another authority
- Not be subject to automated decision-making including profiling

To submit a Subject Access Request visit our [request](#) page.

If you have any concerns

Please contact us if you would like to know more about the information we hold about you and how we use it www.harrow.gov.uk/benefitsenquiryform

You have a right to complain to us if you think we have not complied with our obligation for handling your personal information; please visit our [Compliments and Complaints](#) page.

If you are not satisfied with the Council's response you have a right to complain to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO). You can [report a concern by visiting the ICO website](#).

Automated Decision Making

We may sometimes make an automatic decision on your Housing Benefit or Council Tax Support claim. You will be sent a decision notice if this changes how much benefit you are entitled to. You can request that this decision is reviewed by a member of staff if you would like to do so. Details of how to make this request will be given on the letter telling you about the decision.

Changes in your circumstances

You must notify us immediately if there are any changes in your circumstances and personal details so we can maintain an accurate and up to date record of your information. Changes that may affect your entitlement to benefit can be made online at www.harrow.gov.uk/hbenchangeofcircs